

Watercolour Wonders with Zara the Zebra

Learning objective: To experiment with and apply watercolour techniques including wet-on-wet, wet-on-dry, and colour washing to create depth and texture.

Read the following questions carefully. Zara the Zebra wants you to use your artist's eye to explore how water and pigment interact on paper. Use your knowledge of colour theory and brush control to complete the tasks.

Watercolour painting relies on the balance between water and paint. By varying the amount of liquid, you can control the intensity of the colour and the way it spreads across your paper. Zara loves using a 'wash' to create smooth backgrounds and 'bleeding' techniques to make soft, dreamy edges.

Word bank: Pigment · Wash · Transparency · Bleeding · Dilute · Gradient · Saturation · Resist

1. Explain the difference between the 'wet-on-wet' technique and the 'wet-on-dry' technique. Why would an artist choose one over the other when painting a landscape? (3 marks)

2. If you are painting with a high concentration of pigment, how can you adjust your brush to create a lighter, more transparent 'wash'? (2 marks)

3. Zara is painting a sunset. Describe how she could use a gradient to make the colours blend seamlessly from orange to purple. (2 marks)

4. Justify your answer: Does adding more water to a watercolour pan increase or decrease the saturation of the colour on the paper? (2 marks)

5. What might happen if you use a coarse-textured paper versus a smooth, hot-pressed paper when applying a wet-on-wet wash? Compare the potential outcomes. (3 marks)

6. If an artist accidentally drops a bead of water into a section of paint that is almost dry, what effect will this have on the texture? Explain why this occurs. (2 marks)

Draw: Using a set of watercolours, create a landscape scene that features at least two different techniques: a soft 'wet-on-wet' sky and 'wet-on-dry' details for trees or buildings. Focus on how the colours overlap to create new shades.



Extension challenge: Design a pattern inspired by Zara's zebra stripes. Use a 'resist' technique by using a white wax crayon to draw patterns on the paper before painting over them with a watercolour wash. Explain why the paint does not stick to the areas where you used the crayon.